

*From the Archbishop, Conference*  
1883-43  
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**A LETTER**

TO THE  
*8007*  
**REV. HENRY WILSON, D.D.,**

**STATING OBJECTIONS TO HIS RECENT PAMPHLET, AND  
SUBMITTING OTHER REASONS FOR THE APPAR-  
ENT DECREASE IN OUR CHURCH  
MEMBERSHIP;**

BY THE  
**VEN. T. BEDFORD-JONES, LL.D., D.C.L.,**  
**ARCHDEACON OF KINGSTON,**

**EXAMINING CHAPLAIN, AND RECTOR OF NAPANEE.**

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*Respectfully Dedicated to the Lord Bishop and Clergy of  
the Diocese of Ontario.*

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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The Pamphlet of Doctor Wilson seemed to me so unjust to the Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese, so calculated to do mischief in depreciating the fruitful labours of my brethren during twenty years past, that I felt called on to say something by way of vindication. Knowing the many hardships, the difficulties, and often the opposition they have had to encounter, and the exemplary patience and self-denial with which as a rule, they have been working, while bringing the Diocese to its present condition of prosperity,—a prosperity all bright but for one cloud, dark enough, but now happily passing away,—I should be unworthy of my position were I to keep silence.

I regret that I have been obliged to write hurriedly with frequent interruptions, at the busiest time of the year, and I am sensible how inadequately I have presented my views, and how much more remains to be said, which I would wish to say. However, I have stated my honest convictions I hope not unkindly; and, without expecting all to agree with me, crave indulgence for shortcomings. As the expense of printing this Letter is considerable, may I venture to add, that should any of my Brethren, Lay or Clerical, feel disposed to assist in defraying the cost, I shall thankfully receive and acknowledge such aid. At present only a limited issue is ordered, copies being sent almost exclusively to the Clergy.

T. B-J.

# A LETTER.

*My Dear Doctor Wilson,—*

I have to acknowledge with thanks the copy of your pamphlet, entitled "THE PRESENT STATE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN CANADA: ITS CAUSE AND CURE." Before I was aware that you meditated its publication, and after hearing it read by you at the meeting of our Executive Committee, I had made a few notes on the subject, one of intense interest to all thoughtful members of our Communion. It is well worth our serious discussion. You will not be surprised if very different views are held with regard to the causes of failure and the remedies to be adopted. That is, presuming there has been failure, and that your facts and figures prove it. If, with yourself, I use great plainness of speech, you will, I trust, not for a moment attribute what I say to any lack of personal esteem for yourself, or depreciation of the high motives which I feel sure prompted you to the production and publication of your pamphlet.

## I.

But honestly I must at once tell you I deeply regret the production, and still more the publication. In the first place I cannot but think it sadly *ill-timed*. As a Diocese we are just recovering from a most painful discovery of serious pecuniary losses. We are barely convalescent. For a while our body politic was in extreme danger. I am not exaggerating the fact, when I state that, two years ago, the relations between our laity and the clergy were strained to the utmost. By the mercy of God the evil of an open conflict between the Orders was averted, and, as usually happens when men are brought face to face with a common impending calamity, the result has happily been to draw us all together in closer bonds of brotherly love, and united effort. Just now it seems to me unfortunate that the minds of our laymen, whose confidence the



clergy were winning more than for many past years, should be disturbed by this disparaging diatribe on their spiritual pastors, including the Bishop. We all know how too many are led to avail themselves of the weakest excuses, to withhold what is due by them to God. I fear that this pamphlet of yours will, at a time when we can ill afford it, give many a mean churchman a pretext for not doing his duty. All the more so because it comes from so deservedly respected an authority as yourself.

In the next place, it seems to me that the pamphlet, taken broadly, will have the disastrous effect of exalting the human instruments to the depreciation of the Means of Grace and the Presence and Power of our Divine invisible Head and Lord. I am slow to press this objection. I am fully alive to the great importance of having the officers of the army well trained and efficient. I shall have something to say about this further on. But I feel very strongly that (in this country and on this continent generally) we are in special danger of man-worship. People for the most part care not so much for *edification* as for *gratification*. They meet together in their places of worship not to *give* to God the honour due to His name; not to *offer* the sacrifice of Thanksgiving; not to be built up in sound doctrine and taught practical Christianity, but to enjoy the pleasure of oratorical displays, of emotional eloquence and often eccentric addresses on the part of a preacher. The prevailing tendency is to come to church, not to meet the MASTER, but to hear the *man*. It is not the *treasure of hidden manna* that is cared for so much as the shape, the glitter, the glaze and the daintiness of the human *earthen vessel*. Yet we know that God once chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble," were the first preachers of the cross, the foundation stones of the church. Therefore, I lament anything which, however unintentionally, must tend to turn the eyes of our people—already too much averted—away from the "outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual Grace, given to us and ordained by Christ Himself,"—to the poor human agent, the mortal worm of earth, frail and fallible, as if by him, and through him, and from him alone, was to come to the soul, its strengthening and refreshing, its regeneration and renewal. Herein lies the essential difference between the Church and what we call Dissent. The pamphlet, I repeat, taken broadly, seems to me to be on the side of principles which have certainly never been those of the Catholic Church.

Once more, my dear Wilson, I regret your publishing what might have been perhaps usefully given *ad clerum*, and discussed among ourselves at a Visitation, because the pamphlet does avowedly throw upon "*the ranks of the clergy*," (including the Bishops) all the responsibility for the assumed failure to interest and enlist our Laity, and the assumed falling off in the Church's membership. This seems to me outrageously unfair. Indeed I cannot but feel some indignation that all our acknowledged difficulties, our often missing the success we desire, our impoverished treasury which we strive to fill, all the attacks made from many sides which sometimes we fail to repel, all the occasional losses in our ranks, all the mistakes made by the best men at times,—all are laid at the door of the clergy—as if these were chiefly, or even any appreciable portion of them, "*clerical vagrants*," "*clerical invalids*," or "*clerical millstones*!" Surely, the mountain is in labour and gives birth to a mouse! No one will deny that we have here, as there are everywhere, in every Diocese in the world, and in every religious denomination, some such men as these "*vagrants*," "*invalids*," and "*millstones*." But that their existence will account for the evils we acknowledge, and especially any falling off in our numbers, to my mind is simply preposterous. Forgive my saying this. I never was more amazed and disappointed than when I heard the inference drawn by you from the census figures, knowing as I do the work done by the clergy of our Diocese since its formation—work of which no body of men need feel ashamed. That it is not all it might have been and all the clergy wished it to be, is of course true enough, and I shall try and account for this as I proceed. But the readers of your pamphlet would suppose that our laity have not been co-operating cordially with the clergy, and that we had made and are making little or no progress in the Diocese. The fact is, that considering the numbers and wealth of our members scattered over 15 counties, an immense area of country, and that we began with an empty treasury, there has been an extraordinary and general material progress. Thanks chiefly to the clergy of the Diocese. No evidence of a more practical nature, of the attachment of the laity to the Church, and the energy of our clergy, could be offered than the fact, that during the time the Diocese has been in existence (since 1862) *three-quarters of a million of dollars have been collected from our Laity to build churches and parsonages, to endow parishes and support missions.* This, remember, is quite irrespective of all the money voluntarily given to maintain the clergy in their parishes and missions, and to supply the regular services of the sanctuary, as well as that expended on objects extra-Diocesan.

No, my dear Wilson, instead of having to lament a falling off, I believe that under God's good providence we may rejoice that real and substantial progress has been made by the Church during the last 20 years in this Diocese of ours at all events. Are you aware that in that period from 69 churches the number has increased to 241? Of these 172 are altogether new, some very large and beautiful, while 18 have been re-built at considerable cost. Are you aware that in 1862 there were but 16 parsonages in the Diocese, while at present there are 61? Do you think it possible that were the parochial clergy, the "vagrants," "invalids," and "millstones" you describe, this could possibly be the result of their incompetency and indolence? Certainly I for one do not. Again, let me ask, how many "clerical vagrants" have we had in all the 20 years? Suppose we say half a dozen—though I know of only two or three, if so many,—while in our small, far too small, band of clergy—*although our clerical staff has been doubled*—we have had and have still, some men from other bodies of whom too much praise cannot be spoken. You cannot but know as well as I, my dear Wilson, that there have been with us, as elsewhere, even in richly endowed England, seasons when there was a dearth of clergymen, and of candidates for Holy Orders. Then there were pitiful cries from poor congregations in various parts for the ministrations of religion. At one time we had nine missions vacant for months. Men could not be had: churches were closed: children were unbaptized: the dead often were unburied: our people were leaving the Church. Under such circumstances the Bishop—any Bishop would have done the same—was forced to risk the admission of men with less than the usual qualifications to the ranks of the ministry. You remember how the whole world-wide Anglican Communion sent up to God, twelve years ago, a great simultaneous prayer, at a time when neither "literate" nor illiterates, were offering themselves for the ministry of the Word, and how that prayer was most graciously answered, and the Lord sent forth laborers into His harvest, and how from that day to this our own missions have been filled without much difficulty. But meanwhile, *necessitas non habet leges*.

Again, to speak a word briefly of your "invalids" and "millstones"; (for I wish to hasten on)—whose fault is it that no provision has been made with us for inevitable old age and infirmity? Surely not that of the clergy. It is indeed, I fully admit, a standing misfortune that we have no *superannuation or pension fund*, and no Bishop could, or would



if he could, turn an old and infirm priest out of a certain income enjoyed for years, without having the means to provide for his decent support. Had we indeed a fund, such as is secured in the Civil Service, and a Canon empowering the Bishop with his Council, his Cathedral Chapter, to determine the period when a man had worked out his efficiency, and to insist on his retirement, I believe such action would be productive of great good, and I hope ere long to see both the Fund and the Canon. But up to the present time our aged and infirm clergymen have not been many, and it is only now that the necessity is forcing this important matter on our attention. With regard to your "millstones," I do not know that we have more of them than may be found in every corporation, secular as well as ecclesiastical. The fruits of clerical hard work which I have stated, are the most conclusive evidence that, taking the clergy all round during the past 20 years, we have not had many drones. Indeed, with every drawback, I believe the Church of England has wonderfully held her own in this Diocese, and has no need to be ashamed of her present condition as a religious force.

## II.

But now, my dear Wilson, having said so much by way of objection to your pamphlet, as being in my humble opinion both inopportune, and unfair, I am quite ready to admit that much more progress might have been made by ourselves, and that, taken generally, the Church of England would present a far greater attractiveness to the serious-minded persons of the Christian community at large, but for causes which you have not attempted to touch. These causes seem to me to lie at the root of all failures to increase our numbers. They lie at the bottom, not on the surface of our troubled and more or less repellent waters. Until *these fontes malorum* are removed, it is idle to make the Bishops the scapegoats of failures, or accountable for the occasional wreckage, or for the unwillingness of people generally to trust themselves on board our good old ship. There is no question that we do not attract passengers into that Ark of safety, even those we might reasonably expect, thoughtful persons with souls hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and ready to examine and approve the claims and the privileges of the Church. Our brethren of the P. E. Church across the line seem to enjoy this attractiveness. Last year their new communicant roll numbered 10,308 members, said to be very much an under estimate. Year by year they succeed in drawing into *their* Catholic ship thousands of converts from sectarianism. And, if I mistake not, among their most

eminent prelates and priests to-day, are men who would fall under your designation of "vagrants"

Here I may remark in passing, that your pamphlet is in reality an attack on or an indictment of the Bishops. After all it is *the Bishops* who are responsible for the admission of the "vagrants," the failure to make the "millstones" work, and otherwise guard the interests of the laity against effete "invalids." To me this seems the logical effect of your pages. Now, it is because I feel, no matter what mistakes any of our Bishops may make, or however any Bishop may be derelict in duty, that there are other far graver and more grievous causes to account for our want of numerical increase (which is after all your serious complaint) that I have ventured to take up my pen, and to submit my humble opinions to my brethren in friendly opposition to your own.

Numerical increase! Is this the real test of vitality in the Church? I should much like to argue this question out. I fear that if numbers be the test of a standing or a falling church, our Anglican Communion has not much to boast of, since its isolation from the rest of Christendom. But this I freely confess, that when the numbers of a religious Christian Communion do not increase, it is the result of one of two causes. Either the principles and doctrines held are essentially subversive of God's immutable Truth, or the men employed as ministers are unfaithful, their practice and preaching in opposition to their theory. "They hold the truth in unrighteousness." In either case God's blessing cannot follow. The candlestick will sooner or later be removed. Now, I suppose, we are both absolutely agreed in believing that whatever fault or failure may be charged against the Church of England for want of numerical increase in Canada, the blame does not rest with our *Church principles*. These we are satisfied are as Scriptural as they are Catholic, Apostolic, and Primitive. Nor do I think we can differ about the fact, that it is only within the last half century, when there has been a revived recognition of these principles in England, there has followed a most marvelous increase and growth of the Church in the Mother country. Up to that time our Anglian Communion seemed dying the death of stagnation, or a frozen formalism. Why? Because her *Principles* existed only in theory. Until about 30 years ago the Church of England was a mere British Protestant Sect, or was fast becoming so. This in utter disregard of her true Principles and claims. *An emotional subjective religion* (of which in its proper place I do not mean to say a word of disparagement) was all the religion of the best, almost the only real,



Christians in England for the first quarter of the century. It is all the religion of many still. It is all the religion of the great bulk of the Christians now in Canada. It is certainly better than none. But it is not in theory and principle all the religion of the Church of England. It is not and never has been all the religion of the Catholic Church of God. The "Catholic religion," the legitimate successor and development of the Jewish religion, and both divine, is *objective* as well as *subjective*. It has a grand outward and visible body, as well as an inward and invisible living soul. There is "a clothing of wrought gold" for the "King's daughter" who is "all glorious within." Our Church of England claims unquestionably that she holds and enjoys this historic Catholic Christianity in all its beauty, external as well as internal. Our Prayer Book teaches it all through Formularies and Articles. Do *we* in Canada as a rule? Do our Laity hold it? Among the causes that account for our want of growth in this land, presenting such a contrast to what is going on in England, I place among the first, our general UNFAITHFULNESS TO OUR CHURCH'S PRINCIPLES, or, in one word, our INCONSISTENCY. Take us all round, whether clergymen or laymen, and it is as plain as daylight, that our Prayerbook system is one thing, and our practice is another thing. Let any unprejudiced man take up the Prayer Book and in five minutes he will know whether as a rule the members of the Church of England in Canada obey its directions or not. It is evident beyond the possibility of contradiction that the religion of the Prayer Book supposes us all to be *Daily*, not merely *Sunday* worshippers and Christians. It lays down a weekly Celebration of the Eucharist at least as a standing order. It puts the character, the self-denial, the humility, of Christ before us as our model. It ever takes us back to the examples of Apostles, and other holy men and women, who held not their lives dear to them for the sake of their Saviour, as worthy of our imitation. It presses upon us the inestimable value of living *like*, living *on*, living *for* Christ, as our true security from sin and temptation. And this *every day* of the week. It enjoins *congregational* worship, and so encourages the Laity to value their priesthood. This is the teaching of the New Testament. It was the practice of the Primitive Church. Is it ours as a rule? No. Is it not a painful fact, that for the most part our people do not understand what "*worship*" means? There is a general depreciation of the *worship of God*, as the highest act and evidence of our religion. Any attempt to raise our worship to the dignity and frequency contemplated by our theories, would not be tolerated.

Yet will any instructed man pretend that the grand historic ceremonial enshrining the worship of Almighty God for His Catholic Church, the congregational offering of Praise and Prayer, is that which we here observe and present to public view? Surely not. I am not advocating any revival of "Medieval mummeries," or superstitious practices, the outcome of heretical and false doctrines, against which our Church of England to-day raises her protesting voice as loudly as she did three centuries ago. But I do maintain that there is a standard of worship, and a system of religion held or professed by us in theory, which are to a very great degree ignored in practice. Had I the space I could show this in a variety of details. More than this. You, my dear Wilson, know and cannot help knowing, that there are many sacred verities plainly taught in our Formularies, or taken for granted *passim* in the Prayer Book, that a large body of our laity do not hold, or hold only as unimportant theories of as little consequence as the precepts of Confucius. With what result as regards outsiders? Just this, that they are not induced to join a religious community whose principles and practices are so manifestly inconsistent. I may remark with gratitude that I believe we, clergy and laity of our Ontario Diocese, after twenty years of more or less persistent teaching and effort to be in some measure true to our Prayer Book principles, have less cause to lament divisions than our brethren elsewhere. I rejoice to believe that there has been a steady movement onward and upward of *the whole body*, which is much to be preferred to exceptional and occasional rushes forward of individual congregations, acting without the concurrence of their brethren. These are sure to provoke internal discords and prove fatal. Better far that *all* the regiments should move together, even though at a slower rate of progress, than that half the troops should advance on "at the double," and so meet the enemy with but half the strength of the army. It is, I feel, a matter of much thankfulness that to-day, looking all round our Diocese, we are a united body of churchmen, certainly not ashamed of our Prayer Book principles even though we may not act up to them as we should. And it is to the patient teaching of our clergy that this is mainly due. But it is unfortunately too true, that this is not the case everywhere. In other parts of Canada, there is presented the unhappy spectacle of a house divided against itself. The wise men among us and especially our Bishops, are endeavoring to heal the divisions, and to find some common standing-ground broad enough for all who will be at once truly Catholic, and truly Protestant. God grant them success.

But it must be Prayer Book ground. To it there must be a "levelling up" and a "levelling down." With us the need is to "*level up*." The prevailing unfaithfulness to Prayer Book Principles is, I believe, a sad source of weakness and unattractiveness. If we look homewards across the Atlantic, or to the United States, we may see how and where the most converts are made, and the masses (especially of intelligent working men) are being won to the Church. It is by those Bishops, Clergy and Laity, who are true to *all* the religion of the Church of England, and where there is both consistency and Catholicity. Can we doubt that if *we* were equally true to ourselves we would have the same results? Ah, we are but half-hearted churchmen, and half-heartedness never makes converts.

2. But there seems to me another grave cause for our numerical decrease, if it be so. It is that even in that popular part of religion to which I have referred we are very much behind others. For want of a better term, let me call it SPIRITUAL VITALITY. This to me is a sad confession. But I cannot ignore the humiliating fact, that with our Church of England Community taken as a whole there is less of the emotional subjective side of Christianity than with others. Personal holiness of life is not the characteristic of churchmen. No doubt there are bright exceptions. We may readily call to mind individuals, living saintly lives, lives of devotion to God, of prayer, humility, heavenlimindedness. Thank God, we have such Christians, to whom we may point as precious plants that have been born and nurtured in our own vineyard. But taking the general run of our congregations, our church-going men and women, can we say with truth that they are what we would call "*Spiritually minded*? Is there even a good average, a fair proportion? Let us judge by our own standards. What proportion of our people are regular and consistent communicants? What proportion care to come to church on week-days? What proportion have family prayer? What proportion give to their church anything like what they could and ought, out of love to Christ, and a belief in His Salvation, in a Hell and a Heaven? As a fact I know we are shamefully behind our Church brethren in the mother-land, and what is worse, I fear we are far behind the earnest minded Christians of other bodies around. We need never hope to attract Sectarians to our Communion until we can let them see that our zeal, our holiness, our love to God, and our liberality to Christ's cause are in advance of their own. We must not expect converts until we show the world that our religious system here as elsewhere produces



more and better fruit, a higher type of Godliness, a more real Christianity. I feel with much sorrow and shame that the general low tone of our spirituality is a reproach to us. The mercury of our ordinary religion is only a few degrees above the freezing point. The bulk of our people are really Laodiceans in lukewarmness. They have repudiated as Romish the clothing of wrought gold, and the lustre of the glory within is, alas, miserably dim and faint! Whose fault is this? Let me try and partly account for it. This brings me to the third cause of not making more progress in our numbers.

3. *There is far too much devotion paid by the clergy to the Secularities of the Church.* The clergy from the Bishops down have infinitely too much to do with temporalities—with collecting money, and money dealings generally. I know how this has been forced on them. But nevertheless it is wrong, and has a most injurious effect all round. Suppose we begin at the beginning. Here is a young Deacon, just commissioned as a Missionary of the Cross. He is sent off to a post, usually a poor mission. There at once his chief concern is *not* his spiritual duties, his public prayer, his private ministrations, his theological studies, his thought of his people's souls, the edification of the old, the teaching of the young, but *begging for money* at home and abroad, begging for money to build a church, or a parsonage, or to pay off a heavy debt on one or the other. His mind is at once occupied with dollars and cents as the one thing most needful. He has to be collecting money incessantly for the Mission Fund and various other objects. His ministerial success is gauged by the amount of money he raises in and out of his mission. This is the criterion of his worth to the Church. But still worse. Almost from the moment of his commission to a cure of souls, begin personal anxieties about his small stipend. The year is scarcely out when he is tortured about how to pay his bills. Well for him if he is not married. Let us go on, and see him a few years after. Our people unquestionably prefer married clergymen. They are right on the whole. Nor can young men well-educated, and well-nurtured be blamed for venturing to secure the one comfort, luxury if you will, of a home and a wife, while cut off from all social intercourse and companionship of a congenial character. The society and counsel of a trustworthy and sensible Christian woman ought to be a very real help to a young clergyman in his work, a safeguard from many obvious temptations and dangers. But we know what this entails. A wife and family must be fed and clothed. Like other mortals they are liable to the ills and infirmities

of humanity. Children must have books bought for them, and education given them. And everything has to be paid for. A clergyman in debt to his parishioners soon falls from grace. But the wherewithal? Ah, my dear Wilson, it is all easy enough for some of us in such positions as yours or mine to criticise our brethren's faults, and while enjoying the delights of social and domestic comfort freed from the carping cares of poverty, and the necessity to think twice how every five cent piece is spent, to talk with sweeping censure of the failures, and demand the dismissal of certain unhappy "vagrants," "invalids," and "millstones," but, knowing what I do of the environment of many brethren, worried almost to death by anxieties how to cover their children's naked feet, or put bread into their mouths, or the coarsest clothes on their backs, with fretfulness stamped on every face, discomfort visible in every room—how can it be otherwise?—my wonder is that our missionary work is done half as well as it is, and that our country clergy, forced to be constant beggars of money for the Church and for themselves, have not all the spirituality of their religious life utterly choked by the thorns of worldly cares and pecuniary responsibilities. I feel the clergy are all too heavily burdened with Secular affairs. They are compelled to leave the word of God, and serve tables. Again I say it is all wrong. I should like to say much more on this point. Let me tell you, that as an examining Chaplain for some six or seven years I have been able to notice the changed character of the men, who, after a year's work more or less as Deacons, have come up for their examination for Priests' Orders. Almost without exception, they have worn a distressed look. Almost without exception apologies have been made for falling back and inability to read. Men have often assured me that they have not had the time to open a book since the previous examination. One could easily understand it. The parishioners had all to be found out, and their acquaintance and good will cultivated. Three Services and Sermons at distant stations every Sunday to be managed somehow. Long distances travelled in visiting the sick. All the details of parochial work learned. But worst of all, a great portion of the time had to be employed in begging about the Diocese for the building or completing of a church, to pay off a heavy and obstructive debt—very good work no doubt in its way—but very lowering to the spiritual tone of the Missionary, and so *very lowering also to the spiritual tone of his flock*. Surely it would be far more profitable for the salvation of the souls of his people, and for his own life long usefulness as a Minister of Christ, that this young man's

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Q time should be devoted to prayer and study, and the sacred functions of his profession, while he should be removed from all anxiety as to the means of his own and his family's subsistence. How is this to be remedied? The answer is two-fold.

4. We are sadly defective in *Lay-organisation*. We are still more sadly defective in *Liberality*. First—DEFECTIVE LAY-ORGANIZATION. The Clergy have long been very willing horses, and left to do not only all their own work but the work of the laity as well. Perhaps they are themselves to be blamed for this as much as anybody else. It is the outcome of an old Missionary condition when the people were poor struggling immigrants, and the clergyman had to be a factotum, and do everything, or else little or nothing would be done. But surely our people in this Diocese have long passed out of this state of pupillage. Our farmers in Central Canada hold the position of Country Gentlemen, and are a shrewd intelligent set of men. They are prosperous and well to do, and can conduct their township and municipal council affairs with credit and efficiency. Indeed it would be difficult to find better men of business than our young gentlemen farmers. There has been too long a neglect in availing ourselves of the intelligence and assistance of these churchmen, in our temporal matters. In England the Church is fully alive to the great importance of securing the sympathy and active co-operation of the young men. There is scarcely a well-worked Parish where there is not a *Guild* in which are fostered feelings of union and brotherly love, where work is found for each member, and where also all manner of church questions are freely discussed with the clergyman and one another. Surely if in the political world associations are found necessary to promote party interests, the Church is equally in need of such organizations to strengthen the love and stimulate the zeal of her young people. There is plenty of work for them to do, and the very doing of the work binds them together. There can be little doubt that the *genius loci*, the temperament of young Canada, is not averse to such associations. The popularity of Free Masons, Good Templars, Odd Fellows and Young Britons, with their brilliant badges and banners, regalia, and processions, shows what the taste of the young is, and how easily the Church might take advantage of it for her benefit. My earnest advice to my Reverend brethren everywhere is,—“*Organise and make friends of your young men.*” Bring them together in Guilds and Clubs and classes, and there talk to them and teach them, and train them for the various departments of church work. Once you have them organ-

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ized and interested you will have no want of help in your choir, your Sunday School, your Library or your collecting. Make them feel that they are considered of importance, and that it is *their* business to look after the stipend of the clergyman, the support of the services, the fuel, the lighting, &c. Let a couple of these young men be commissioned to do the begging for a new church or a parsonage. I am not sure but that a pair of earnest young laymen properly accredited by the Bishop and the Parish Priest would evoke most sympathy from their lay brethren in the cities and towns. But be it remembered that there must be a body as well as a spirit to your Guild. Do not despise the Badges and Banners, the Regalia and Processions. Here indeed I do think is one weak point to account for some falling off in our numbers. As a Church we do not try to interest our young people as we see done by the various religious communities around us. Our laymen old and young are not organized, and trained to do their proper work, to look after the Church's temporalities. The sooner we rectify this the better.

5. But there is a far worse defect than even the lack of organization. A few years ago there was an excellent Tract widely circulated, entitled a "*Lost Act of Worship*," with reference to the Offertory, and the important and peculiar place the giving of alms holds in the highest act of our Christian religion. But with the majority of our Canadian churchmen the GIVING TO GOD, whether out of church or in church, seems a LOST DUTY, a duty dropped out of the list of their liabilities to God. Here, my dear Wilson, I fear I have to join issue with you, while I lay the blame for any falling away of our members, not on the few unfortunate specimens of indifferent clergymen, but on the immense number of specimens of *illiberal laymen*. What I have just said will show that I do not depreciate the service of our lay brethren, especially those of our "country gentlemen." But I most solemnly charge these very churchmen with the responsibility of nearly all our difficulties and defects by their illiberality. Again let me say, I know there are exceptions. We can happily point to excellent laymen, and these chiefly professional men,—*not the men of property*,—who do show a most practical sympathy in the Church's welfare—who give their money, and time which is worth more than money, to forward the work of the Church in this Diocese. All honor be gratefully accorded to these good and generous laymen. Alas they are but few among the many. Their charity covers a multitude of the sins of others. But it does not cover them all. Alas, alas, how few really liberal churchmen have we in our Diocese! We

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continue to squeeze about \$8,000 for our Mission Fund, our Church's mainstay, out of 80,000 members, by dint of persistent appeals four times a year! A large proportion is given by the clergy. What share comes from the great bulk of our own people, the populous farming class, those who derive most benefit? Something disgracefully, contemptibly small. Compared with men of the same rank and means in other religious bodies, our laymen, as a rule, are all woefully behind in liberality. I mean, in the duty of *giving to God*. In my own County town a week ago was published a list of subscriptions to the Canada Methodist Missions. The contributors are of the same class in life as those who belong to the Church of England, and about the same number. The amount for this year was over \$300! Our people will probably not make up \$100, of which one-third will be given by three or four individuals. Yet, after all, one cannot find much fault with these business men in town for not giving their money to provide clergymen for people far better able than themselves to maintain their ministers. Take two neighboring farmers, each of them having, say 200 acres well cultivated, and a comfortable well-furnished house, acres and house all long ago paid for. Both are prosperous men and are what may be termed respectably religious men. One is a Methodist, the other a Churchman. The former gives ungrudgingly his \$25 a year as a subscription to the minister's stipend, the Churchman give \$5 towards that of his clergyman. To his Mission Fund the Methodist at once gives \$5, the Churchman one dollar. Remember we are trying to account for the little comparative growth of the Church as contrasted with that of other bodies. You, my dear Wilson, lay the blame on the clergy, and I maintain that the cause lies with the meanness of our laity, who expect everything from their clergy, but give them next to nothing, who wish to have the best article at the price of the worst. Just consider. Suppose that our Church farmers, these country gentlemen, were to give in the same proportion as the Methodist and Presbyterian farmers. Why, not only would we have means sufficient to maintain the Church in all those missions that *really require aid*, but we Churchmen would, with our Presbyterian and Methodist neighbours, be able to send out missionaries to the back and long neglected settlements, to commission during the summer young divinity students to hold services in places still more remote, and so to be learning how to become true and efficient missionaries.—to be, as it were, serving most usefully an apprenticeship in their preaching and ministering, and, let us not forget, winning the

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straying sheep themselves into our Church fold. This is where and why we are losing ground. I am persuaded it is not in our old parishes or missions where we have had our men at work. I believe that had we been during the last decade suffering any serious losses, our officers who are most interested, would not be slow to complain of and state the fact. But where I believe we have lost ground is just where we have had no missionaries, not even "vagrants," "invalids," or "millstones." And why? *Because of the want of means.* Because as a rule, our people, let us be honest about it, have little or no missionary spirit among them. Because their religion is essentially selfish. Because just as long as they have their own wants supplied, and this at as cheap a rate as possible, they care little for the wants of others—even of their brethren of the same household—and the growth and extension of their own Church and its privileges. Because they have never been taught, at all events have never learned, or have lost sight of, the great *Duty of giving to God His due proportion of their means.* Do, my dear Wilson, let us put the saddle on the right horse, and not let our mean selfish churchmen ride off with the terrible delusion, that our decreasing numbers, as told by the Census Tables, are the result of *clerical incompetency.* It is not so. It is the horrible selfishness and covetousness and illiberality of the laymen as a body that is at fault, though chiefly the *country laymen.* The great problem I am satisfied before our Church of England in Canada at present is how to induce her prosperous country people to maintain their Church as they are well able to do. In a way the people in cities and towns do fairly, though far less than their dissenting brethren. But comparatively the country people do little or nothing, with few exceptions. Yet these very people demand first-class clergymen, the best educated gentlemen, and refuse the miserable pittance they do pay, if their missionaries be not paragons of perfection. It is full time our people all round should know that when they give a higher price they can have a better article. They must be made to understand that educational training and ministerial efficiency are worth something, and that it is just because of their own want of liberality that better men as well as more men are not employed. But this brings me to the last point. Yet it is not the least in importance. It lies very deeply below our people's deplorable want of missionary liberality, and it may be one of the causes why our numbers do not increase as we would desire. I must put it as a question, and we should try and not give a hasty or flippant answer.

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6. IS ANYTHING WRONG WITH OUR SYSTEM OR OUR SERVICES? Are these adapted to our country and our times? Is the stately and calm Liturgy of the Church suited to every class in our Canadian community? Has it sufficient elasticity? Do those precious forms of prayer, hallowed by the use of ages, and endeared to all the refined and educated and pious from their childhood, tend to make some others mere formalists, satisfied with a perfunctory worship, and a religion that does not touch the heart? Have we elasticity enough in our worship as a Missionary Church? Are our network of rubrics, the repetition of State Prayers twice a day, the unvarying "Dearly beloved" and other elaborate addresses, are these adapted to our existing circumstances? Is our service too complicated? Is its language always intelligible to the uneducated? Would, what may be termed, a more free and easy mode of worship have more attraction for the younger generation and those as yet untrained in and unaccustomed to the Prayer Book? These questions are worth serious consideration. I ask them indeed chiefly with reference to those outside our fold whom we would wish to bring in. For our discussion is about the causes of the relative decrease in our numbers and how to account for it. But I cannot help repeating these questions with regard to many of our own rural and city congregations. Do they as a rule appreciate their Prayer Book? After years of explanation and encouragement, do our congregations sing out and speak out as they should in Canticles and Responses? Is the ordinary service in our churches what it was intended to be, a *congregational service*? If not, why? What proportion of our people, after all our teaching and preaching, kneel down reverently, and make a solemn reality of their prayers and praises? Would the behaviour of an ordinary Church congregation on Sunday attract or repel a stranger of another denomination? I would beg my good lay brethren unto whose hands this paper may come, to think over this question. Is the fault in the Form of Services? If not, where?

Again, I may ask, are our tactics as a church, a missionary church, the best that can be devised? Are we aggressive enough? Are we, clergy and laity, as alive as we should be to presenting the claims and privileges of the Church, and pressing them on the people outside our own communion? What has brought about in the States the influx of members from the surrounding sects? Has it not been in great measure their *controversial literature*, their *active aggression*, and the feeling that every churchman and churchwoman was bound to be a missionary? We

Very different at present. <sup>Extraordinary</sup> confusion has driven many to ch. for. v. sects there - by an inevitable reaction.

know well enough how the church is attacked on every side. How our people all over the country are mixed up socially with Dissenters. How wives and husbands, brothers and sisters, to say nothing of business partners and others in all the relations of life, are of different persuasions and how therefore *our* members are exposed to a never-ceasing strain to desert their Church and their Catholic Faith. What weapons do we put into their hands—what defensive armour do we provide—for our people's use during the six days of the week! Our churches are closed. We have no class meetings or prayer meetings. We present a spectacle of far less earnestness than the Sectarians. Our members are notably subject to far less discipline. They have a *Sunday religion*, and very little of that. They leave the sanctuary in crowds when the great Christian Sacrifice of Praise is about to be offered. How does all this look to outsiders? Is the sight one to attract or to repel? Again, I ask, is our system really at fault? There is something wrong surely either in our mode of working, or in our worship, or in our Christianity.

These, my dear Wilson, are some of the main causes which, to my mind, underlie any such lack of increase in our numbers as you, and we all deplore. These, I believe, are the operating sources of our weakness far, far more potent than any incompetency of the clergy. I may just summarize them, and leave them for the consideration of my brethren. But before I do so, I wish to say, that I feel, however you and I may differ,—and differ we do materially,—we owe you some thanks for calling attention to the subject. It will now have to be discussed. This I say, though wishing the discussion had come at another time. May God grant that some good will result therefrom. Hoping I have written nothing which may cause you to think I depreciate your sincere desire to promote our dear Church's welfare, I now recapitulate the causes, or some of them, which in my opinion may account for the lack of greater numerical increase to our Church of England membership. They are:—

- I. UNFAITHFULNESS TO CHURCH PRINCIPLES.
- II. A WANT OF SPIRITUALITY—GENERAL WORLDLINESS.
- III. THE SECULARITY OF CLERICAL WORK.
- IV. ABSENCE OF LAY-ORGANIZATION.
- V. LAY ILLIBERALITY—INADEQUATE MAINTENANCE.
- VI. UNSUITABILITY OF SYSTEM AND SERVICES FOR MISSIONARY WORK—TOO LITTLE ELASTICITY :

And I remain, my dear Wilson,

Very fraternally yours,

THOS. BEDFORD-JONES, LL.D.,

Archdeacon of Kingston.

Napanee Rectory, February 28, 1883.